



HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Fiscal Year 2008
July 1, 2007—June 30, 2008

October 2008

Message from the Acting Health Officer:

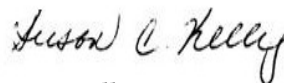
When things go well, public health is almost invisible to the general public, but public health affects our lives on a daily basis. The Harford County Health Department promotes and protects the health of all residents through the provision of care and service programs at numerous locations throughout the county. This Annual Report is designed to give you an overview of our public health activities and show you how public health impacts the citizens of Harford County.

There are many positive things happening in the area of public health. The Clean Indoor Air Act, which bans smoking in restaurants and bars, took effect this year. This public health law will reduce exposure to harmful second hand smoke and will mitigate chronic health problems associated with smoke exposure. The smoking ban has been well received in Harford County by facility operators, employees, and patrons alike. The school-based FluMist® program launched in 2006, was duplicated again this year for the second year in a row. The Health Department received state and national recognition for this innovative immunization project which is a hallmark of public health. Most of the services formerly housed at 119 S. Hays St. have moved to the new health department location in Woodbridge. This beautiful new facility is a stark contrast to the old health department building, providing a modern and friendly environment for our clients and staff.

We have responded to the unique challenges in our health department as an opportunity for improvement and change. Despite the fiscal constraints at all levels of government, I am pleased to report that we have secured additional grant funds to implement new programs, such as our *Public Health Dental Care Clinic* in Edgewood; and in collaboration with our community partners, we received grant funding for a *Healthcare for the Homeless* program and the *Integration of Services for Patients with Co-occurring Mental Illness and Substance Abuse* initiative. These programs help bridge gaps that currently exist in health care, but much work remains. We must continue to look for creative partnerships and revenue sources to meet the most critical needs of our citizens. As a public health entity, we are challenged to action to consider non-traditional public health concepts, such as the social determinants which impact the health of our citizens.

I am often asked to define local public health. Why do we offer some programs but not others? How is “public health” different from other types of health care? This Annual Report is designed to help address some of these questions. The report provides a brief description of each program, a breakdown of the number of services provided, and highlights from the 2008 fiscal year.

We are committed to achieving excellence and continue to work with our partners to refine our services, always looking for ways to grow. Please feel free to contact us through our website (www.harfordcountyhealth.com) or by telephone (410-838-1500) to comment or become more involved with our work.



Susan Kelly, R.S.
Acting Health Officer

Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Hazards

Communicable Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Control: Collects, investigates, and analyzes reports of communicable diseases. Alerts physicians and the public of disease trends and unusual occurrences. Takes appropriate actions to stop or control disease outbreaks.

Immunization Program: Provides required childhood immunizations free of charge to children with no health insurance as well as flu and pneumonia immunizations to adults.

- ◆ 1,435 clients received immunizations (non-influenza/pneumonia)
- ◆ 4,775 flu shots given at Health Department clinics
- ◆ 8,660 FluMist® doses given during the school based FluMist® project

Rabies Control: Investigates rabies and animal bite cases. Provides low cost rabies vaccination clinics for dogs, cats, and ferrets. Provides counseling and post exposure prophylaxis to animal bite victims.

- ◆ 248 animals tested and 33 tested positive for rabies
- ◆ 2,096 animals vaccinated in health department clinics
- ◆ 588 reported animal bites investigated
- ◆ 27 people given pre-rabies vaccine and 72 people given post-rabies vaccine

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Program: Provides education, screening, diagnosis, and treatment of STD.

- ◆ 1,476 clients seen in clinic and counseled

HIV/AIDS Services: Provides free anonymous or confidential HIV antibody testing, educational counseling, and case management.

- ◆ 737 people tested and 87 enrolled in clinic
- ◆ 163 educational programs given via individual and group counseling sessions attended by 121 participants
- ◆ 124 clients received HIV/AIDS Case Management at any given time throughout the year



Enforce Laws and Regulations That Protect Health and Ensure Safety

Safety of Water and Sewage Systems: Reviews preliminary plans, final plats, and site plans for construction; conducts water quality sampling and soil evaluation/percolation tests to ensure proper septic/sewage disposal; and issues permits and conducts inspections.

- ◆ 1,911 building permits reviewed/approved
- ◆ 477 sanitary construction permits issued and 297 well permits issued
- ◆ 1,374 perc tests/soil evaluations performed

Public Protection from Foodborne Illness: Protects the community through plan review for food service facilities, inspection of food facilities, and investigations of foodborne diseases.

- ◆ 1,798 food service facility permits issued (841 permanent food service facilities and 957 temporary food service facilities)
- ◆ 251 food service complaints investigated

Recreational Sanitation: Licenses and inspects public and semi-public swimming pools and camps.

- ◆ 234 pool inspections and 94 permits issued
- ◆ 31 camp inspections and 11 permits issued



Air Quality/Solid Waste Control: Issues open burning permits, responds to a variety of air pollution complaints, provides guidance, direction and resource information.

- ◆ 396 air/waste complaints investigated
- ◆ 106 burning permits issued
- ◆ 57 mobile home park permits issued

Tobacco Vendor Compliance: Supports and strengthens efforts to prohibit the sale, distribution and possession of tobacco products to minors under the age of 18 and create public awareness of the state laws concerning youth access to tobacco through education and enforcement.

- ◆ 81 Youth Tobacco Access Vendor Compliance Checks performed
- ◆ 31 citations issued to merchants as a result of illegal sales of tobacco to minors

Respond to Disasters (Natural and Man-Made) and Assist in Recovery

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Works with other county agencies and regional health departments in responding to natural or man-made emergencies. The Health Department is available 24 hours a day for public health emergencies.

- ◆ Participated in the first regional Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) drill with community partners
- ◆ Reviewed the county's Mass Fatality Plan and tested it during the Maryland Pandemic Flu drill in June
- ◆ Conducted a full scale regional radiological decontamination drill (PEACHBEX 2008) in April 2008. The drill was reviewed by FEMA with no health department deficiencies found
- ◆ Repeated the school based FluMist® project and presented the county 2006 FluMist project at the National Immunization Conference in Atlanta

Promote Healthy Lifestyles By Informing and Educating People

Tobacco Control Program: Provides free smoking cessation classes and counseling, as well as Nicotine Replacement Therapy to all interested Harford County residents.

- ◆ 13 smoking cessation classes and trainings conducted serving 133 persons
- ◆ 390 weeks of Nicotine Replacement Therapy distributed to clients

Public Health Education: Provides presentations, informational materials, and staff exhibits at community and school based venues on a variety of health topics.

- ◆ Reached out to over 100 community organizations representing more than 5,000 people
- ◆ Reached out to approximately 7,000 students and parents through school based initiatives

Public Health Matters: A series of informative health related televised presentations produced by the Health Department and the Harford Cable Network.

- ◆ 7 new productions on the topics of Asthma, Dental Health, Cervical Cancer, Diabetes Prevention, Colorectal Cancer Prevention, Youth Sports Safety, and Lyme Disease

Link People to Needed Personal Health Services

Children and Adolescent Services

Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP): Provides access to full health benefits through Managed Care Organizations for children up to 19 years old and pregnant women of any age who meet income criteria.

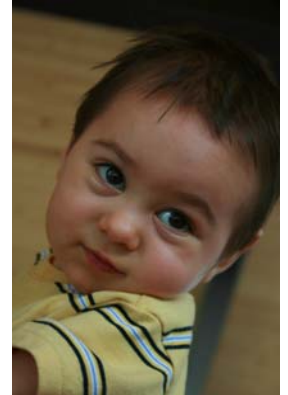
- ◆ 2,571 MCHP applications processed covering 3,623 applicants
- ◆ 2,004 deemed eligible for services

Care Coordination and Home Visiting: Provides maternal and child health education, service coordination and case management to eligible mothers, infants, and children. Provides a family-focused, educational and problem solving approach to assist families in accessing medical and social services.

- ◆ 1,138 clients received prenatal and child health services

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): Offers nutrition education, health screening, breast-feeding support and supplemental nutritious foods to eligible pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children.

- ◆ 1,128 prenatal and 763 postpartum women received services
- ◆ 1,979 infants and 2,234 children received services
- ◆ 1,880 women received breastfeeding services
- ◆ 489 pregnant women received enhanced prenatal nutrition services
- ◆ 2,020 participants received Farmer's Market checks for fresh produce



Infants and Toddlers Program: Provides no cost early intervention services to developmentally delayed children (0-3 years old) and their families in the child's home or day care setting. Services include evaluation and assessment, occupational/physical/speech therapy, audiology, vision services, and family training/education.

- ◆ 640 children referred to the program
- ◆ 603 active eligible children served

Lead Program: Provides case management of children with blood lead levels of ≥ 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ and referrals for appropriate follow up. Provides targeted community outreach in at-risk areas for the prevention of childhood lead poisoning.

- ◆ 6 children case managed

Child Fatality Review/ Improved Pregnancy Outcome: Provides an ongoing community based and culturally sensitive process for assessing, planning, and monitoring service delivery systems and broad community resources that promote and enhance the health and well being of women, children, and their families.

- ◆ 26 fetal and 10 infant mortality cases reviewed
- ◆ 11 child fatalities reviewed
- ◆ Reviews resulted in 13 community and 7 provider interventions

Teen Diversion Program: Provides a twelve-week intensive mental health outpatient program for adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18 who have an emotional or psychiatric disorder and who are at risk of psychiatric hospitalization, a more restrictive educational placement or a placement in a residential treatment center. The goal is to divert teens from more restrictive placement and to transition them back to the least restrictive therapeutic and educational setting.

- ◆ 33 clients served

Addiction Services

Adult Addiction Services: Provides services to adults, including comprehensive assessment, group and individual counseling, medications as needed, and urine toxicology testing. Assessments and referrals are also provided to higher intensity residential treatment, including for pregnant women and women with children.

- ◆ 1,097 adults received services

Adolescent Addictions Services: Provides services to individuals under 18 years of age or who are still in high school. Services include group, individual, and family counseling sessions, in-school intervention and assessment services in most middle and high schools in both public and private school systems.

- ◆ 277 adolescents received services

Drug Court Addiction Services: Provide substance abuse education and treatment for first time non-violent offenders.

- ◆ 54 adolescents and 62 adults in drug court received services

Women Wellness Services

Family Planning Services: Provides gynecological services, contraceptive education, and birth control to women of childbearing age.

- ◆ 2,812 people received services in 5,171 visits
- ◆ 2,074 pregnancy tests and 1,001 emergency contraception services provided to walk in clients

Colposcopy Clinic Services: Provides diagnostic examination and treatment referral for uninsured Family Planning clients who have an abnormal Pap test.

- ◆ 115 clients served in 123 visits

Other Services

Medicaid Personal Care Program: Provides assistance with activities of daily living to Medicaid recipients who have a chronic illness, medical condition, or disability. Services are provided by self-employed or agency employed providers, who are approved and monitored by a health department nurse case manager. Services are provided in the eligible individual's home or community residence.

- ◆ 144 participants enrolled
- ◆ 90 active care providers enlisted

Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS): Assists older adults and people with disabilities who need long-term care services and are at risk of institutionalization. AERS staff conduct Statewide Evaluation and Planning Services (STEPS) evaluations to identify services that individuals need to remain in the community.

- ◆ 129 STEPS evaluations completed

Medical Assistance Transportation Services: Arranges transportation to medical appointments for eligible persons.

- ◆ 3,103 wheel chair van rides provided
- ◆ 449 ambulance rides provided
- ◆ 39,622 taxicab rides provided



Administrative Care Coordination Unit (ACCU): Provides outreach, education, and care coordination to potential and enrolled Medical Assistance recipients. Educates recipients regarding HealthChoice, addresses barriers to care, and works to increase access to care.

- ◆ 1,838 individuals received outreach and education
- ◆ 785 pregnant and post partum women and 975 children received services
- ◆ 92 adults with special health care needs received services

Hospital and Nursing Facility Outreach Program (Real Choices): Provides information and referrals to individuals 18 years and older who are at risk for long term care. Clients must have Medical Assistance or be eligible for Medical Assistance within 180 days after nursing facility placement.

- ◆ 5 hospitalized cases
- ◆ 1 nursing facility rehabilitation case

Breast and Cervical Cancer Program: Provides breast and cervical cancer screening services to women 40-64 years old who are low income ($\leq 250\%$ of the Federal Poverty Level), uninsured, or underinsured.

- ◆ 226 women received services (i.e. clinical breast exam, mammogram, and GYN exam)

Colorectal Cancer Program: Provides colorectal cancer screening for men and women 50-64 years old who are low income ($\leq 250\%$ of the Federal Poverty Level), uninsured, or underinsured.

- ◆ 51 individuals received a 60-90 minute eligibility/education session and a screening colonoscopy



School Health Readiness: Provides health care, mental health care, and preventive services to students who may lack the access to health care. These services are provided at five elementary schools in Harford County.

- ◆ 2,294 health room visits and 930 mental health visits

Dental Clinic: Provides dental services to county residents. Services are primarily targeted to youth ages 1-18 who are on medical assistance.

- ◆ 505 clients served in 803 visits (clinic opened in the last quarter of FY08)

Health Care for the Homeless: Through a collaboration between the Harford County Health Department and Upper Chesapeake Health, case management and primary care is available to homeless individuals throughout the county. This program began providing services on September 1, 2007.

- ◆ 241 patients seen in 721 encounters

Major Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2008

Integrating Services for Patients with Co-occurring Mental Illness and Substance Abuse: In June 2008, the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission awarded the Division of Addiction Services a grant to identify and link dually-diagnosed inmates at the Harford County Detention Center with comprehensive substance abuse, mental health, and medical services in the community immediately upon release. The Health Department partnered with the Harford County Sheriff's Office and Detention Center, the Harford County Office on Mental Health/Core Services Agency, Alliance, Inc., and Upper Chesapeake Health to obtain the grant. Services are set to start for project participants in September, 2008.

Online Access to Food Inspection Data: In an effort to provide public access to food service facility inspection data, the Division of Environmental Health began posting cited critical violations of the food service facility regulations on its website beginning in November 2007.

Implementation of the Clean Indoor Air Act: As of February 1, 2008, the Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007 prohibits smoking in virtually all indoor workplaces in order to "preserve and improve the health, comfort, and environment of the people of Maryland by limiting exposure to environmental tobacco smoke." The Health Department's Division of Environmental Health and the Division of Health Education coordinated awareness, outreach, and enforcement efforts to implement the Act. Information regarding the highlights and requirements of the Act was mailed to 950 licensed food service facilities and non-profit organizations on January 29, 2008.

Opening of Public Health Dental Clinic: The Health Department opened the doors to its new public health dental clinic on March 31, 2008 after several years of research and planning. The clinic was made possible through generous grant donations from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission, the Drescher Foundation, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Within the first three months of its opening, the clinic served 505 patients in 803 visits. The clinic serves 20 to 30 patients per day. Staff at the clinic includes 3 dentists, one dental hygienist, 2 dental assistants, 1 front desk secretary, and a program coordinator. The success of the dental clinic has been overwhelming. Presently, our primary target population is children ages 1 through 18, on medical assistance.

Opening of Woodbridge Station Office in Edgewood: In June 2008, the Health Department, opened a new site at 1321 Woodbridge Station Way in Edgewood. The new office houses the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, the Division of Health Education and Cancer Prevention and the Health Promotion and Disease Control Program. The new facility offers modern clinical areas that allow for improved services to our clients.

Healthcare for the Homeless: The Harford County Health Department in conjunction with Upper Chesapeake Health received a Health Care for the Homeless expansion grant in June 2007 to provide comprehensive primary care as well as case management services to homeless persons in Harford County. Through successful partnerships with the Office on Mental Health, FCCAU, Alliance, Inc. and the Department of Social Services, services such as mental health, substance abuse, and housing services have been provided to program participants in a coordinated system of care. This is a three year grant with the option to be renewed.

Opie Otter: Opie Otter was adopted as Maryland's public health mascot. Why Opie? River otters are an ideal symbol for public health. They are native to North America, have an active lifestyle, a healthy diet, are environmentally sensitive, excellent caretakers of their young, adaptable to land and water, clever and resourceful, and fun loving!



Wash your hands!



For more information, contact:

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